1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
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593 have to go to the fields they should not accompany each other, but should follow one after the other to avoid the effects of the evil eye. It is not considered 'polite' for married brothers to sit together at one meeting. Moreover, there is no joking relationship or greeting terms between brothers.

The relationship between sisters is mainly based on affection and mutual co-operation, but not necessarily that of solidarity as they are destined to live in separate homes after marriage. The same pattern of relationship obtains between brothers and sisters although married brothers are socially responsible for their unmarried sisters. In the case of the sister's divorce, her brother is the guardian in the absence of the father. More often than not, a widowed woman who has no sons, goes to live with her brother, and hands over to him her property that she inherited from their father.

595 The relation between consanguine brothers and sisters is supposed to be bristling with friction and jealousy. Though they are from the same father and carry his name, their mothers are called 'darra'-rivals; and hence they identify themselves with their mothers from the emotional point of view. Solidarity between consanguine brothers is not structurally expected as they are not nursed from the same breast. Uterine brothers are expected to be more affable and less quarrelsome with each other. This difference is partly intelligible when it is known that consanguine brothers inherit land and property from their father, while uterine brothers are 'screened' and do not inherit anything from the stepfather. However, whether between half-brothers or full brothers, the expectation of friction between siblings is widely held, and does actually occur, and is usually explained as an expression of their jealousy and rivalry. Apart from the motive of sibling rivalry to which reference will be made later, this friction between siblings could also be attributed to the absolute authority of the father. Jealousy of, and rivalry for the father's power, is suppressed and made acceptable by the possibility of gaining rewards of good behaviour both on social and religious grounds. Hence the father-son conflict is displaced to the brothers and sisters, who are in open rivalry for the father's favour and his sanctions and rewards. Moreover the methods of their early training, as will be discussed later, do not contribute to the suppression of rivalry; on the contrary, they stimulate and emphasize the value of rivalry in social behaviour.[1]

604 The relation between a boy and a girl and his or her paternal or maternal uncle reflects almost the same relationship pattern that obtains between children and their father and mother. The paternal uncle and aunt are expected to support the father in enforcing discipline and social sanctions. It is even said that the main responsibility in this respect lies on the uncle's shoulders, as the father might be inclined to be less firm, having particular love for his children. On the other hand, the maternal uncle and aunt are also the source of affection and pampering. Grown-ups can sit

[1] This explanation is based on a similar situation in the Tanala culture of Madagascar. Cf. Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and his Society*, pp. 315–16.

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pride in the number of my followers in comparison with those of other nations". If sons and daughters behave uprightly they will act as a means of redeeming the parents' sin. Any good action by the child, e.g. giving alms, helping the weak, digging a well, would also benefit the parents. Parents who have left unworthy children have left "dust" behind.'

My informant went on to say: 'Children are the glory of this world, as the Koran says "Money and children are the joy of this life". Another statement of the Koran says: "God give us a good thing in this world and a good thing in the next world". The Koran interpreters consider that, in this context, "the good thing of this world" implies children. Children are also referred to as sowing seeds, as it is through these seeds that the corn reproduces itself.'

As for the wife, she attains her proper status only as a mother, and a childless woman is in an insecure position, as her husband is socially justified in remarrying, to have children. For a newly-married couple to have a child is a step towards partaking of some individuality in the larger family circle. The wife is referred to as 'mother of the children' and whenever a man is asked about his wife, she is frequently referred to also as the 'mother of the first-born boy' and the same applies also to the father, and this reference is more common in public gatherings.

My informant, Mahmoud, told me that there were ten childless women in the village and that they were therefore known by everybody. Out of these ten, two were living with husbands who had taken a second wife. He continued, 'A childless woman is usually like a she-camel who does not conceive, puts on more and more flesh, and gets younger every day—but not fruitful, as she can never "lengthen" her husband's neck amongst the menfolk. She is a sore eye to her family. The proper woman is the one who is an "envelope for conception".' It is not strange, then, that a fat woman is a desirable ideal, as she has more room to bear the child, lactates abundantly and gives more warmth to her children.

It is appropriate here to discuss the differential value of boys and girls in Silwa. The importance of the boys' work in the fields as a major contribution to the family's means of subsistence was discussed earlier. Moreover, the boys are considered to be the best capital investment for ageing parents. They are expected to form the basis for social and economic security, not only for their parents, but also for any widowed sisters. This duty to support their parents or those female relatives who have no other man to support them is legally enforced by the religious courts. This question gives rise to endless disputes; one hears of parents suing their children for support according to their means, or at least threatening to sue them. No such obligations devolve on the daughters, as they are wives of their husbands, and no claim can be made against them.

Boys are also an added qualification for social prestige. A man with more sons backing him up can always speak with more authority and ranks high in the community's esteem even if he owns less land. Fathers who have

871 His methods are by no means arduous. Two or three
794 hours a day, six months a year, and in three years the fellah children, helped by the stick, will know a good many *suras* by heart. For his pains the *fiqih* or teacher receives two loaves of bread, or one piastre, a week for each pupil.

872 Nowadays even the girls must go to school, but their
562 turn comes in the afternoon. In the morning they help their mothers and fetch in the water, trying their best to
[482] balance on their heads the little *ballas* which is given them.
857 When they grow up they will be able to carry seven gallons of water in this way. They are also made to gather dung, bird-droppings, and any other refuse which may be useful in the house or the field. They make fuel cakes (*gilla*) by
[372] taking a little mud, some chopped straw and a quantity of dung, which they knead into a paste with their hands and feet, and then take lumps of, to flatten into cakes about eight inches across. These are spread out on the ground to dry in the sun, or stuck on the wall. When thoroughly dry they are piled up on the roof. These dung cakes are the fellah's coal; they are an essentially agricultural form of fuel, used wherever wood and money are lacking, for example in China and in several parts of France.

524 The girls have rag dolls to play with, but more often,
857 up to the age of about twelve, they join with the boys in both work and play. Occasionally, from the age of eight
[464] until they get married, they go into service in middle-class homes.

857 These children are ignorant and to all appearance neg-
593 lected. They live in a herd and seem to have no patronymics. But it would be wrong to infer from this that they are of no concern to their parents, and belong to the community at large. On the contrary their parents love them passionately, far more than they love each other. Children are never put
● [736] up for sale here as they are in China, and there is no need for orphanages. Parental sensitiveness is a frequent cause of quarrels among both men and women. If a teacher hits or
861 ill-treats their child they are up in arms immediately to
871 remove him from school and take a brutal vengeance. This does not, however, stop them from using blows and insults to 'educate' their children themselves.

593 The children are also very much attached to both their parents. This attachment seems to be rooted in their